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ABSTRACT

This paper argues that the amorality evident among U.S. citizens may be the result of individuals and society's inability to understand the relationship between the public and private life of the citizen and the role and function of ethics in that relationship. The argument has three premises. First, U.S. citizens have developed a sort of cultural amnesia. They seem to have forgotten the historical and philosophical foundations upon which the United States was constructed and which found expression in the Declaration of Independence and "The Federalist Papers." Second, U.S. society has fostered isolationism, privatism, and libertarianism at the expense of democracy and capitalism. Third, the U.S. citizen's pursuit of self-gratification, while seemingly rational, is detrimental to the country's philosophical tradition and to the social theory and social relationships that are necessary for personal well-being. To help move educational content and practice toward virtue, 11 questions are posed for discussion. A 23-item bibliography is included. (DJC)

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ETHICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS OF DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP

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Ethical and Philosophical Foundations of Democratic Citizenship

> "What I do is my business. I got pregnant, so what. It's my baby and I'll raise her my way. Besides, who cares? So get off my case!"

These are the words of a sixteen-year-old high school student* who recently gave birth to her first child. The statement is presented here not as a judgment on teenage pregnancy nor as a statement of self-assuredness, but as a metaphor of a condition that holds us apart from one another and eats away at the foundation of the republic. The sixteen-year-old senses her isolation from the social system and moves away, while society sees the corruptible nature of the individual and works to segregate her with welfare and education programs that can belittle and debase, and with laws and language that have the potential to victimize. In a word, this condition can best be described as amoral . . . neither moral nor immoral . . . lacking in ethical standards.**

What follows is the advancement of the argument that the condition of amorality may be the result of our inability as individuals and as a society to understand the relationship between the public and private life of the citizen, and the attending role and function of ethics in that relationship. The argument turns on three premises. First, that we have developed a sort of cultural amnesia. That is, we seem to have forgotten the historical and philosophical foundations upon which the republic is constructed. Second, that our society has fostered isolation, privatism, and libertarianism at the expense of democracy and capitalism. And, third, that our pursuit of self-gratification, while seemingly rational, is detrimental to our philosophical tradition, and to the web of meaning, social theory, and social relationships which are necessary for personal well-being.

*Identification of this woman is withheld by request.
**See any dictionary of the American language.

Paper prepared by Dr. Michael Hartoonian for the "Citizenship for the 21st Century" Conference, Washington, D.C., October 5-7, 1988.

Cultural Amnesia

In the 19th century, there was a common greeting exchanged between merchant sailing ships who passed each other on the high seas. They would ask of one another:

> Who are you?
>
> What is your destination?
>
> Who is your captain?

This greeting can serve us today as an analogue for asking some fundamental questions about our collective memory. Questions such as: Who are we? What social theories do we hold? What conception of human nature do we accept? Cultural amnesia develops when we stop trying to find out who we are and what is expected of us. That is, who we are as ethical beings, individually and as a nation. As a point of entry into our cultural heritage, consider James Madison's statement about virtue and "the people":

> "I go on this great Republican principle, that the people will have virtue and intelligence to select men of virtue and wisdom. Is there no virtue among us? To suppose that any form of government will secure liberty or happiness without any virtue in the people is an absurd idea".
>
> James Madison, 1788, in defense of the New Constitution.

The notion that common, individual people could be reservoirs of virtue, as opposed to virtue being vested in a king or the aristocracy, was, and may still be a radical political concept. Yet at our nation's birth it was an idea supported by men as politically different as Hamilton and Jefferson. Using the writings of Locke, Montesquieu, Hume, Rousseau, and even Machiavelli, the founders of the American Republic set in motion a radical change in the traditional ideas which people held about good government, human character, and

civic virtue. The classical notion of virtue claimed that the highest goals of politics, goals such as freedom and empire, will ultimately encourage ambition and a vulgar prestige (MacIntyre, 1984). Virtue in the pursuit of power, empire, or even freedom turns ultimately to vice, because in the classical conception virtue cannot be a means to an end; it is an end in itself. In this view, virtues such as courage, temperance, and justice are important in and of themselves; as such, they give life its purpose. While these virtues may help promote safety and prosperity in a society, they are esteemed in the classical sense as good in their own right, and not necessarily useful in the pursuit of safety, prosperity, or liberty. Over and against this attitude, perhaps the most important intellectual notion of our revolutionary period was a change in this meaning of virtue. The classical conception was transformed and virtue became a force or a way to build a better society . . . a society which would place emphasis upon individual dignity and integrity. The founders believed that the individual should be the source of virtue, and this principle paved the way for Americans to conceptualize virtue as the underpinning for both their economic and civic worlds. This new understanding of virtue became basic to our work in constructing a new social theory of who we were and who we were to be.

Within the economic world, it was clear that property, prosperity, and the attitudes needed to succeed in business and commerce were part of the American system of virtue. Individual virtue expressed itself in an "adventurous entrepreneurship" which distinguished our commercial character. But, this individual expression should not be seen as a self-centered conception of the world or the market. On the contrary, the individual saw himself or herself as part of the community where cooperation and dependability (industry) drove economic behavior. This understanding of the individual and community can be seen in two important theoretical statements made in 1776. The first, by Adam Smith, in his book, The Wealth of Nations, articulated the concept of "self-interest properly under-

stood." This means that if the individual understands the true nature of self-interest he or she will try to insure the health of the community, for the free market cannot function if the infrastructure is weak . . . and particularly if it is ethically weak. Adam Smith's "invisible hand" of the marketplace can only function if driven by a visible conscience.

The second statement, Jefferson's Declaration of Independence, presents us with the concept of public happiness. This concept also includes attributes of both individual and community. The founders believed that happiness should be understood as "public" happiness; that is, a virtue tied to the ability and willingness to participate in the public life of the community. This was much more than economic participation. This source of happiness was defined as giving of oneself and one's resources for the betterment of the community. Happiness and service are concepts rooted and linked in our heritage. Both Pericles and Marcus Aurelius, for example, agreed that while it was right to serve your city - the right, and even the good thing to do - the best reason for service was the joy it gave (Weiner, 1974). Thus, the citizen of the new republic was to embrace both concepts of the public good and individual dignity as defining attributes of virtue, and in so doing it would become, at least theoretically, difficult to separate personal/economic virtue from social/civic virtue. They were both seen as necessary conditions for the role of citizen, particularly if the citizen was to be engaged in the "pursuit of happiness."

Within the civic world of power and legitimacy, one important discussion at the end of the 18th century centered on the question of how virtue was to be reflected in the people. In the classical view, the aristocracy rules because through education they have the greatest potential for virtue and, therefore, the clearest title to participate in government. The aristocracy does not serve the people in the sense of obeying the people, but rather serves to guide them toward a better way of life. On the other hand, the leaders of the new

republic viewed the question of "who rules" as a function of the "voice of the majority," and allowing the majority of the people significant power in government, even if in the beginning the majority meant white men over the age of 21, calls for popular education; education that would develop quiet courtesy with high purpose. Requiring rulers to gain the consent of the governed is a mighty bulwark against tyranny, even the tyranny of the majority, if, and only if, the people understand the role of virtue in public life. "I know of no safe depository of the ultimate powers of the society but with the people themselves; and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take power from them, but to inform their discretion through instruction." (Thomas Jefferson, 1820)

As we moved from the eighteenth into the nineteenth century, it became clear that to help secure life, liberty, and public happiness it would be necessary to address and establish two ideas which were and still are necessary conditions for the maintenance of the republic. First of all, a system of checks and balances (including a bill of rights) would be implemented, thus placing one person's ambition in the way of another's ambition. "What is government itself but the greatest of all reflections on human nature? This policy of supplying by opposite and rival interests, the defect of better motives, might be traced through the whole system of human affairs." (The Federalists No. 51.) Second, education would be provided to all citizens so they might develop a reservoir of virtue. However, the founders were extremely uneasy about the feebleness of civic education in the new order. Jefferson, particularly, argued long and eloquently that education for enlightened citizenship was the first responsibility of the republic and particularly of the states. To this end, he effectively proposed educational reforms for the state of Virginia as well as for the young nation. On this same theme, George Washington wanted a national academy for the training of political leaders. Even the Bill of Rights, appended to the constitution,

was viewed not only as a condition for ratification, but as a way for future generations to educate themselves into civic responsibilities (virtue). In a real sense it was our first civics curriculum.

The dual concepts, then, of education and checks on ambition were to serve the republic in the development of virtue. That is, a self-critical, self-correcting ability coupled with an enlightened sense of statehood or enlightened nationalism would constitute our civic/-economic foundation.

It seems clear that the republic's major underlying premise was the belief that virtue and education would work together and would reinforce each other. Individuals would be virtuous if, and only if, they were educated in civic conscientiousness and have opportunities to share their wisdom with others working for the improvement of society. Education's first goal was, and is today, the development of individual dignity and the public good--together. The centrality of virtue in education is made most explicit in this idea. Cultural amnesia occurs when we forget this premise and its link to our cultural heritage. Ideas such as public happiness, self-interest properly understood, and virtue are all necessary if we are to address the questions of: Who are we? In what direction does our public policy point us? and, What values drive our civic behavior?

Privatism and Capitalism

The notion that capitalism, through competition, is primarily a system that isolates people from one another both belittles capitalism and confuses competition with privatism--the idea that you can "make it" alone using your own rules. Further, this confusion sets in motion and perpetuates the idea that morality can exist in a climate where people are

basically alone. Morality and being alone is a philosophical and ethical contradiction. Even though one cannot delegate a moral decision, neither can one be ethical alone; for ethical behavior needs a context of interactions with others as well as with the larger environment. "As Robert Bellah and his associates have pointed out, the idea of the 'unencumbered self reveals nothing of the shape moral character should take, the limits it should respect, and the community it should serve'—and, it might be added, of the political/economic obligations of a citizen in a self-governing society. Thus, the concept of value as arising from or implicit in one's own inner feelings and psychic needs, though attractively pluralistic, open-minded, and releasing, is also in the end vacuous and asocial in a way that impoverishes rather then fulfills the human potential for moral and political life." (Ketchum, 1987).

The capitalist must pay particular attention to the ways in which our institutional environments—the places in which we live and work—foster competition and cooperation. We shape these institutional environments, then they shape us—ethically. In a larger sense we need to understand the interrelationships between competition and cooperation and the dysfunctions of isolation, privatism, and individualism in the economic system. Indeed, private or free enterprise may be a contradiction in terms. We are beginning to learn this lesson both from the Japanese and Europeans, as well as from the historical roots of capitalism found in Adam Smiths' writings. As he has argued, the highest value of the economic person (self-interest) is only functional if it is understood as enlightened self-interest. While Smith disagreed, somewhat, with Dr. Hutcheson, one of his mentors, who held that the practice of benevolence was the only way to stamp virtue upon the individual, he (Smith) did agree that the virtues most important to the health of the economy are sobriety, industry, justice, and fortitude (Moral Sentiments, 1759). These virtues serve the self but they are also qualities that in the long run support the free market and state. He would, no doubt,

go beyond the notion of cooperation manifested in quality circles or management teams to the idea that the "economic man" is, and must be, first of all, an ethical person. Those who would say that Smith did not pay much attention to these values must be careful to see Smith's work within its historical setting. The Wealth of Nations was basically a political and philosophical statement that was meant to be used to bring down the economics of Feudalism and launch a more modern social period. By today's standards it is a rather regressive economic position that could not see the nature of the modern, multinational, global economy. It was, however, for its time, remarkable, and in its vision not unlike our Declaration of Independence or Constitution. That is, they were all political/philosophical statements. The Constitution, particularly, in its statement on slavery, for example, is regressive and shameful, but taken as a whole and as a political statement it was forward looking and one that provided a framework for ethical growth through its amendment process and through judicial review. What is important for us to understand today is that the history of the rise of capitalism, while marked with unjust episodes and institutions, and often saddled with extraneous ideologies like Social Darwinism, is still rooted in enlightened self-interest. Enlightenment meaning that if the economic person does not care for the health of the community, the market itself will die. It is a simple lesson sometimes only dimly understood by citizens, but its power is in its truth. The community not only needs a healthy infrastructure, but more importantly, an ethical context that implies, for example, that when we shake hands on a deal, we have struck an ethical contract. Any institution or person who cannot see the truth in the need to care for the community (and in many cases that includes the globe) as well as in the need to link the ethical and economic person is no friend of capitalism. Competition is fine so long as it stays within the ethical boundaries of those virtues clearly delineated by philosophy and practice. Virtues such as: justice, sobriety, fortitude, benevolence, industry (not only hard work, but good work) and temperance. These virtues are not within the domain commonly understood

as privatism--the "rugged individual" of frontier fame. The so called "rugged" individuals who succeeded paid careful attention to and cooperated with others, and together, they also paid attention to ethical principles. If they got out of line, either with one another or with principles of virtue, they would lose. One way or another and in the long run they would lose. From producing poor products to polluting the environment; from Watergate to Iran-Contra to the Pentagon scandal, they lose. "Nothing can bring you peace but the triumph of principles" (Ralph Waldo Emerson, Self Reliance, 1841). And, nothing can bring you economic well being but the triumph of principles. Principles that are consistent with our philosophical traditions and help us define the nature of the good citizen.

Philosophy and Citizenship

The relationship between citizenship and education on the one hand, and between philosophy and education on the other, strongly suggests a symbiotic or mutually beneficial link between and among them. The citizen of a free republic must be schooled or educated in those areas of knowledge, skills, and dispositions, which, in their practice, define the essence of philosophy. The claim made here is that the essence of philosophy and citizenship is found in criticism, meaning, and love. This trilogy integrates the meaning and practice of enlightened citizenship.

Criticism, meaning, and love are parts of the same whole. Each of the three ideas defines itself in terms of the others. The notion is not unlike the trilogy advanced by Plato in regard to the concept of justice. In the dialogue between Meno and Socrates, (see, for one example, The Dialogues of Plato, B. Jowett, Editor, Vol. 1, Random House, New York, 1937.) Socrates defines justice in terms of temperance and courage. That is, an understanding of justice is possible only within the context of temperance and courage; to be

just is to be courageous and temperate. To be courageous is to be just and temperate, and so on. The defining qualities of one value are held within other values. This notion of defining one value in terms of other values holds for the qualities of citizenship as well as for the elements developed within the discipline of philosophy (Aristotle, Nicomachean and Ethics and Plato, Republic, and their other works, any edition). If we address the three values of love, criticism, and meaning as an inclusive set that defines the necessary attributes of citizenship, we can better understand the significant concepts and issues that tie together philosophy and citizenship. It should be noted, however, that in doing so certain contradictions, such as a preference for rationalism as well as a reliance upon the transcendence of formal logic; a separation of value from fact, as well as the combining of these notions will be seen. But, philosophy, as other human creations, is tied to the discourse of temporality, and over time succumbs to the vicissitudes of will and chance.

Let us begin our journey into the trilogy through the idea of love. Montesquieu writing in Spirit of Laws stated, "A government is like everything else; to preserve it, we must love it." Within western thought the ancient Greeks provided us with language that exercised great influence on the modes of expression and discourse associated with the concept of love. The Greeks had many words for love, which relate to its importance in their life. From friendship (Philia) to passion (Eros) to high affection (Agape), the Greeks (Heraclitus - 6th century B.C. and Empedocles - 5th century B.C.) established love as the physical (unifying agent) principle of the universe. Heraclitus believed that there were two forces in nature--repulsion and attraction--and he held that love (Harmonia) results from the tension of opposites. Empedocles held that similar phenomena attracted, but the results of the process of attraction are the same. The notion of the same and other, Greek and Barbarian, one and the many is at the center of political/economic debate and manifests itself in questions of equity and justice. It was also the center of Plato's arguments on

human discourse - the problem of opposition between the Singular and the "infinite" Dyad, and of their reconciliation and unity. Love was the agent of true discourse and the function of unification was its definition. The role of love, if we can think of a concept as playing a role, is one of unifying the parts from the reconciliation of Singular and Dyad, to the concept of "many in one" (E Pluribus Unum). Love is necessary in keeping the union a union, and in keeping a market fair or just.

Within the concept of love, we can also see another important attribute of citizenship--loyalty. Loyalty, as part of our understanding of love, can be traced back to Deuteronomy (6:5): "You shall love your God with all your heart." Israel is to have one loyalty--one love or unifying force. In Leviticus (19:18) this idea is extended to one's neighbor: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." (Also see Matthew 22:37-40, and Luke 10:27-28). The individual was to be loyal and love God, her own soul, and her neighbors.

The concept of love and its application to the state or country (other citizens) and even to the land has also been made explicit over time.

"It is also true that the victorious man's conduct is often guided by the love of his friends and of his country and that he will, if necessary, lay down his life in their behalf."

Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics

"These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it now deserves the love and thanks of men and women."

Thomas Paine, Crisis (1777)

"That land is a commodity is the basic concept of ecology, but that land is to be loved and respected is an extension of ethics."

Aldo Leopold, Sand County Almanac (1948)

While love and loyalty to one's soul, one's self, one's neighbors, and one's environment are necessary attributes of the good citizen, it is also the case that the whole business of civic loyalty must be viewed with skepticism--particularly by the democratic citizen. Great injustices can be perpetrated in the name of love, if not in love itself. So if citizens are to pursue justice and truth, to say nothing of friendship, our second value in the necessary attributes of enlightened citizenship--criticism--must be engaged.

Criticism within the context of democratic/capitalistic citizenship, yields a comprehensive understanding of reality. Criticism presumes a philosophic world view which lends direction and predisposes civic behavior in the pursuit of more just goals and relationships between the individual (or family) and the state. Criticism is concerned with judgments about self, education, existence, values, and thinking itself. Civic and economic criticism, by definition, means clear communication among citizens. That is, criticism is only possible when citizens respect standards of clarity, truth, and human dignity. Empathetic listening is as important as the right of free speech. But criticism goes beyond clarity to embrace the concept of courage. It simply takes courage to act on standards of truth, clarity, and human dignity.

Civic and economic criticism carry at least three interrelated behaviors. First, the citizen must value, observe, and absorb the social culture of the state or society so as to "bring in" a more complete picture or a more "true impression of the situation." (We should note the contradictory nature of the phrase "true impression.") This calls for the ability to take in information, impressions, and arguments, and conceptualize the setting within a temporal and spatial context complete with explicit as well as subtle issues, promises, and problems. Next, the citizen must be able to react to the setting. That is, she or he must be a countervailing force, or at least, an asker of questions. These questions should probe

the consciences of self and others as part of the search for the just society. Finally, the citizen must judge. Judgments must be made of policy, political leaders, and self. It is particularly important that the citizen of the republic develop a critical view of the political economy even though in the modern world this is extremely difficult. "Most men decide to accept one notion rather than another because of certain superficial and extraneous traits which they consider to be more in conformity with truth than with falsehood and which are easily discernible; whereas solid and essential reasons which reveal truth are difficult to come by. Hence, since men are prone to follow the easier course, they almost always take the side on which these superficial traits are apparent." (Pierre Bayle, 1697) It is this proneness for superficiality that is dangerous to the republic and why criticisms, even of personal behavior, are so vital to the health of the state. But, people will lovingly criticize only those institutions, ideas, and people in which they find personal meaning.

Meaning is achieved through engagement. Engagement means being intensively involved with others in common activities, commonly perceived as good for self as well as for others so engaged. Meaning may be at the heart of happiness as well as the heart of citizenship. Meaning and citizenship seem linked at two significant points. One has to do with settings, and the other with rhetoric. There are contextual limits to all human discourse and endeavors. With regard to the former, the conceptual limitations of meaning are fundamentally setting and time, or, in terms of receiving meaning from the utterances of others, convention and circumstance. Paraphrasing Habermas, Cherryholmes (1985) suggests that meaning resides in what the speaker is engaged in, and what the individual is counting on hearing. To be meaningful, communication must rest on truth, rightness, truthfulness, and comprehensibility. But, these elements of rhetoric will only "work" within a homogeneous context where norms and expectations are shared. We could even add discipline and logic

to rhetoric to obtain a more complete notion of discourse and still fall short of the definition of meaning which ties together love and criticism. Meaning in this more complete sense addresses not only the context of discourse but discloses those human visions, social theories, and belief systems (ideologies) that illuminate as well as disguise and conceal the ethical acts of people. Meaning cuts through to the moral bone of society, baring the collective nerve and exposing such questions as: Who rules? Why? What rules should we follow? Why should we obey them? Will obeying rules lead me to the good life? What social theories should we follow? Where did (do) they (social theories) originate? How do these social theories stand up in the light of social facts?

When democracy and capitalism are understood as complimentary systems; love, criticism, and meaning serve as their philosophical roots. These ideas, in turn, rest on the notion that people work together not only within social systems, but within ethical systems. One cannot exist without the other.

Cultural Patterns and Education

There is a fascinating story told of a young Australian Aboriginal boy on his "walkabout," a test of manhood where he is sent into the desert to find his way through a series of water holes, thus proving himself ready as a warrior or die in trying. He has nearly completed his journey when he comes upon two young British children, brother and sister, who are sole survivors of an airplane crash. Lost and hungry, they face certain death until the young Aboriginal discovers them. They gradually overcome the difficulties of language difference, and the Australian boy teaches them how to find food, water, and shelter. For a time, all goes well until a tragic misunderstanding develops. Mary, the sister, decides to help the Aboriginal overcome his nakedness, so she removes her panties and gives them to

him. Her brother finds the Aboriginal's appearance in girls' panties obviously ludicrous and begins laughing and jumping up and down. The combination of the panties gift and the young British boy's antics suggest the need for a native dance to the Aboriginal, and he responds in a rather frenzied fashion, so frenzied, in fact, that he snaps the elastic in the panties and the panties fall to the ground. James V. Marshall then elaborates:

And once again he was naked; for at the moment of climax the elastic of the panties had snapped and the gift--symbol of civilization--under his feet, trampled into the desert sand.

White girl and black boy, a couple of yards apart, stood staring at one another.

The girl's eyes grew wider and wider.

The bush boy's eyes widened too. He realized, quite suddenly, that the larger of the strangers wasn't a male: she was a lubra, a budding gin.

He took a half-pace forward. Then he drew back, appalled. For into the girl's eyes there came a terror such as he'd seen only a couple of times before: a terror that could for him have only one meaning, one tragic and inevitable cause. He began to tremble then, in great, uncontrolled, nerve-jerking spasms. For, to him, the girl's terror could only mean one thing: that she had seen in his eyes an image: the image of the Spirit of Death.

To the bush boy everything had its appointed time. There was a time to be weaned, a time to be carried in arms: a time to walk with the tribe, a time to walk alone: a time for the proving-of-manhood, a time for the taking of gins. A time for hunting, and a time to die. These times were pre-ordained. They never overlapped. A boy couldn't walk before he's been weaned; couldn't take a gin before his manhood had been proved. These things were done in order.

This was why the question of the girl's sex had never interested the bush boy. Didn't interest him now. For in his tribal timetable he had only arrived at the state of walking along: the state of walkabout, the test of manhood.

It was this test that the bush boy was now engaged in. He had been doing well: had covered the most difficult part of the journey. Yet he wasn't, it seemed, to be allowed to finish it. For the lubra had looked into his eyes and seen the Spirit of Death.

Death was the Aboriginal's only enemy, his only fear. There was for him no future life: no Avalon, no Valhalla, no Islands of the Blest. That perhaps was why he watched death with such unrelaxing vigilance; that certainly was why he feared it with a terror beyond all "civilized" comprehension. That was why he now stood in the middle of the Sturt Plain, trembling and ice-cold, his body beaded in little globules of sweat.

Peter looked in amazement, first at the bush boy then at his sister. He couldn't grasp what was happening; couldn't understand how things had gone so suddenly and terribly wrong. Afraid, his recently-acquired confidence quite drained away, he reached for his sister's hand. Then, unexpectedly, he started to cry.

To the bush boy the little one's tears were confirmation: confirmation of what the lubra had seen. He turned away. He left the worwora at the edge of the billabong; he left the lace-edged panties by the ashes of last night's hearth. Slowly he walked away into the desert.*

Addicted to cultural patterns which channel human energies into rutted and fixed behaviors, the two young Britishers are unable to acclimate themselves to their situation well enough to see either the causes for or consequences of their predicament. Indeed, their ignorance of this facet of human nature costs them their lives.

Like the two young Britishers, we too seem channeled by the paradigms we operate within. The paradigmatic human is a fact of life and one that we must understand, and understand with some urgency. Given the dynamics of our global natural and social systems, we must develop a perspective that will allow us a more comprehensive view of ourselves and our world . . . a mindset that will see self-interest and the common good as parts of the same idea.

The young woman cited at the beginning of this essay, who gave birth to her first child, is locked into a particularly limited paradigm, as are the legal, economic, and political systems that picture her in a restricted way. Until we can develop a broader, more inclusive mind-set—which constitutes the ethical perspective--most of us in this rapidly changing world will continue to be channeled in ways that are detrimental to our republic and to ourselves. It is this need for perspective that brings us face to face with educational policy and citizenship.

*from James V. Marshall, Walkabout as cited in University of Minnesota Project English Curriculum Unit 703, Excerpt no. 3.

The argument made here is that this ethical perspective may best be achieved by direct instruction, including the behavior (modeling) of adults. Paraphrasing Thomas Jefferson we might say, " . . . and if the people are indiscreet (without virtue) the appropriate action is not to take power from them, but to enrich and enhance their reservoir of virtue through education." The education that enhances and enriches the reservoir of virtue must directly address the basic principles of the republic--of democracy and capitalism--including an understanding of public happiness, enlightened self-interest, justice, and industry (craftsmanship). This education must deal with the nature of knowledge, truth, and how we think about knowledge and truth. Above all, this type of education should manifest the belief and practice that one is educated not to become better off; one is educated to become better!

If we focus on the goals of knowledge, truth, thinking, and becoming better (moving toward virtue) then our school programs will have to establish as their first goal the exploration of the dynamics between social/personal principles and the facts of the so called "real world." That is, a dialog is needed between the ideals of society and reality--between social theory and gross facts. For the ideal and real to be in sparking communication, educators must get beyond naive realism (Chandler, 1987)--the belief in certainty and one truth; multiple rationalism--the belief in no truth or complete relativism; to an understanding of construct validity (Cherryholmes, 1986)--the belief that if we study social theory (principles) as well as the empirical settings in question, and try to move society toward those principles, we may bring more meaning and justice into the lives of citizens of the republic.

Barbara Tuchman (1978) articulates this situation when she writes about 14th century Europe. The parallels to our contemporary world cannot be missed by the reader, but the

important idea is the discrepancy between principles and practice. From our vantage point today, educators should see the relevancy of this dynamic to citizenship education.

> Chivalry, the dominant political idea of the ruling class, left as great a gap between ideal and practice as religion. The ideal was a vision of order maintained by the warrior class and formulated in the image of the Round Table, nature's perfect shape. King Arthur's knights adventured for the right against dragons, enchanters, and wicked men, establishing order in a wild world. So their living counterparts were supported, in theory, to serve as defenders of the Faith, upholders of justice, champions of the oppressed. In practice, they were themselves the oppressors, and by the 14th Century the violence and lawlessness of men of the sword had become a major agency of disorder. When the gap between ideal and real becomes too wide, the system breaks down. Legend and story have always reflected this.

Is the gap between ideals and practice too wide today? Where do we find and develop our social principles? How can we bring more congruency between the social theory of America and the facts of everyday life?

These questions can be addressed by students and educators. All of us can develop social theory statements based upon our (historical and contemporary) understanding of such documents as the Declaration of Independence, the preamble to the Constitution, Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I have a dream" speech, and so forth. Students can also assess current social/personal circumstances and develop policy statements that can help bring social theory and practice closer. This type of general pedagogical strategy can also help students become better at constructing personal and public policies, as well as focus on the future and on the ethical health of the republic. It can place before them the opportunity to confront the meaning of proverbs 29.18:

> "Where there is no vision the people perish."

In its original Aremaic or Northwest Semitic language context (Anderson, 1957) and even in the Greek translation, the word vision meant virtue. That is, "Where there is no virtue the people perish." Metaphorically, we might understand the importance of virtue and ethics to social, economic, political, and legal systems by envisioning an iceberg. The ice above the waterline can represent our visible social and cultural institutions, while the ice below the water is analogous to our philosophical and ethical systems. The constellation of values within the latter keeps the social institutions buoyed-up. While invisible to the passing ship the quantity of ice below the water is larger than that which we see above. It is also the case that the visible ice on top of the water cannot exist without the invisible below. In a similar vein, our social, economic, political, and legal systems are visible and viable only so long as the "foundation" values are functioning.

Every society and culture has its operational philosophical and ethical systems. The issue is never the existence of values, but the nature of those values. Do they illuminate the best of human hope, faith, courage, integrity, and compassion, or do they deny the universality of the human spirit? Such a denial, of course, separates and belittles the different and the unique among us. Such a denial skews power and resources into the hands of the few and the very few. Such a denial also betrays the future and ignores the past by failing to cherish human beings and their accumulated wisdom. Within the context of a democratic republic, education, by definition, means the movement toward this wisdom (virtue/vision).

To enhance our discussion and help move educational content and practice toward virtue we might ask:

1. What knowledge is of most worth?

2. Who/what do I love?

3. How can I achieve happiness and freedom?

4. What obligations do I have to my parents (past); to my children (future)?

5. What obligations do I have to my community?

6. What is a good person? A good society?

7. How can education help a person become better?

8. Can a political, economic, legal, or social system have a conscience?

9. How can social institutions become more ethical?

10. What social theories do I hold?

11. What facts about our society and the world support my social theories? How do I know?

The willingness to discuss and act on such questions might help us move toward virtue. If we could progress toward the best we can be, perhaps our young high school student above, who feels alone, and the institutions that fail to understand the contextual situation in which she lives might yet come together; leave the amorality of separation and walk into the light of wisdom. We should have the courage to see where our imagination would lead us if we would allow such questions to be our educational guide.

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